DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 443 889 TM 031 534

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TITLE School Careers of Students from Ethnic Minorities in the Netherlands.
INSTITUTION Amsterdam Univ. (Netherlands). SCO-Kohnstamm Inst.
PUB DATE 2000-04-00
NOTE 17p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (New Orleans, LA, April 24-28, 2000).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Academic Achievement; Comparative Analysis; Elementary Secondary Education; *Ethnic Groups; Foreign Countries; *Minority Groups; *Parent Background
IDENTIFIERS *Cultural Capital; *Netherlands

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the influences that are related to a successful school career for students in the Netherlands and compared ethnic minority students with students from a Dutch background. Data were drawn from a study on Dutch educational policy for 5,311 students in elementary and secondary school, 24.5% of whom were ethnic minorities largely from Surinamese, Turkish, or Moroccan backgrounds. Students of Dutch background clearly had higher levels of academic achievement, and their parents had higher socioeconomic status and more cultural capital. Findings suggest that it is better to study cultural capital than socioeconomic status alone when considering the academic achievement of ethnic minority students. (Contains 4 tables, 2 figures, and 22 references.) (SLD)

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TM031534

Paper for the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, April 24-28, 2000, New Orleans, Louisiana

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School careers of students from ethnic minorities in the Netherlands

Ineke van der Veen[1]
Wim Meijnen

Introduction

The literature devoted to the school careers of students from ethnic minorities in the Netherlands reports that these students do not perform as well as students of Dutch background. As a reason for this less successful school career often the low socio-economic background and/or cultural factors of the parents of ethnic minority students have been mentioned. However, the factors that underlie the school career of ethnic minority students might differ from the factors that underlie the school career of Dutch background students with a low socio-economic status. This paper investigates the influences that are related with a successful school career and compares ethnic minority students with students from Dutch background. The main focus will be on the cultural capital of the students' parents. But before examining the literature, a brief overview will be given of minority groups in the Netherlands, the Dutch education system and the position of minority groups within this education system.

Ethnic minorities in the Netherlands

Since the sixties, a number of minority groups have settled in the Netherlands. Three main groups can be distinguished: immigrants from the former colonies; guest workers; and asylum seekers and refugees. Immigrants from the former colonies came from the Moluccas in Indonesia, Surinam and the Antilles and Aruba. These immigrants have grown up with strong ties to the Dutch language and culture and generally already had the Dutch nationality in their country of origin. In 1996 this group consisted of 376,000 people, in a total population of 15,7 million. Members of the second group, guest workers from Southern Europe, Morocco and Turkey, were encouraged to come to the Netherlands because rapid economic growth meant that there was a lack of unskilled labour. Although most guest workers originally planned to return to their country of origin, a large number have remained in the Netherlands. Turkish and Moroccan immigrants who have arrived more recently (often to be reunited with their families) have nearly all stayed. In 1996, 272,000 Turks and 225,000 Moroccans lived in the Netherlands. In 1996, 90 percent of the children from ethnic minorities younger than 16 years old were of the second generation. As a result of the economic crisis at the beginning of the eighties, the socio-economic status of the immigrant groups has deteriorated. Many are long-term unemployed and new arrivals have had great difficulties finding a job.

The Dutch education system

An important feature of the Dutch education system is that after finishing primary school children can choose between four different types of secondary education. (Figure 1 provides a representation of the Dutch education system). The most essential choice is between vocational education (vbo), which prepares students for manual occupations, and the three types of general secondary education: mavo, havo, and vwo. As can be seen in figure 1, these

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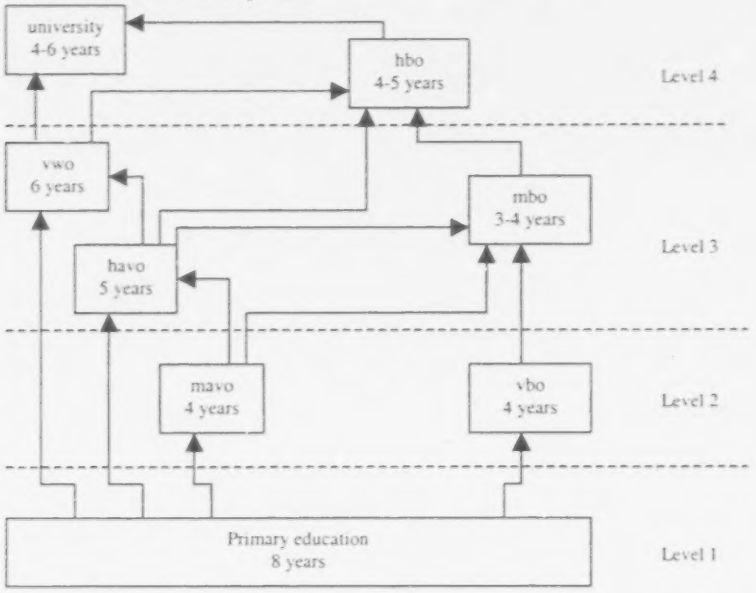
three types of general secondary education differ in length. They also differ from each other in terms of complexity and function: vwo (6 years) is intended to prepare students for university education; havo (5 years) is intended to prepare students to attend institutions of higher education other than universities (higher professional education); and mavo (4 years) is intended to prepare students for what is known as 'intermediate vocational education'. Another feature of the Dutch education system is that there is more than one possible route to a particular level of education. The arrows in Figure 1 indicate the different routes that students can follow. For instance, students who complete lower general secondary education (mavo) may either choose to proceed to an intermediate vocational education (mbo) or to continue on at high school in order to obtain a higher level of general secondary education such as havo.

Figure 1 The Dutch educational system



Abbreviations

havo: Higher general secondary education
hbo: Higher professional education
mavo: Lower general secondary education
mbo: Intermediate vocational education
vbo: Lower vocational education
vwo: Pre-university education

Source: Wolbers and De Graaf (1996)

Ethnic minority groups and education

On average, members of ethnic minorities in the Netherlands attain a lower level of education than people of Dutch-speaking background (Tesser & Veenman, 1997). Although the second-generation are better educated than the first generation, they still have an educational disadvantage in comparison to people of Dutch background. Minority ethnic groups on average also have a considerably lower socio-economic status than people of Dutch background. Driessen et al. (1998) studied the school careers of over 57,000 children in Dutch primary schools. They found that there were large differences in school achievement between groups from different socio-economic backgrounds. Pupils with parents with a lower socio-economic status performed considerably less well at school than pupils with parents with a higher socio-economic status. In the course of primary school, these differences increased somewhat for language scores, but decreased somewhat for arithmetic scores. An analysis of

the data from a study by De Wit et al. (1996) revealed differences in school performance between primary school pupils which related to both socio-economic status and ethnic background. In this study more than 5,700 primary school students in the Netherlands were followed from 1988, when they were in the fourth grade of primary school, until the second year of secondary school. The study revealed that only 4 percent of the Turkish and 2 percent of the Moroccan background students were more successful in primary school in arithmetic and language skills than students with parents with a higher socio-economic status (this included both ethnic minority and Dutch background students). This compared to 20 percent of the Dutch students with parents with a lower socio-economic status who were more successful. All in all, it seems very clear that, on completing primary school, different groups of students have very different levels.
In secondary school a relatively large number of Turkish and Moroccan background students attend a lower type of school (i.e. vbo or mavo). However, the differences between Turkish/Moroccan background students and Dutch background students do seem to be somewhat smaller than in primary school. For example, analysis of the data of De Wit et al. (1996) also revealed that in the second year of secondary school 19 percent of the Turkish and 17 percent of the Moroccan with parents with a lower socio-economic background attended a school of a higher level (i.e. havo or vwo) than the mean school level of the students with parents who do not have a low socio-economic background. This compared to an only slightly larger 21 percent for students of Dutch-speaking background.
Nonetheless, throughout secondary school drop-out rates for ethnic minority students are substantially higher than for Dutch background students. Almost half of the second-generation Moroccan background students and almost a quarter of the second-generation Turkish background students leave school without a diploma, compared to only about 7 percent of students of Dutch-speaking background

Theoretical background

In the Netherlands, in lower school levels students from low socio-economic backgrounds are overrepresented and in higher school levels students from high socio-economic backgrounds. The French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1979) offers an explanation for this. He argues that parents provide children with a "cultural capital" which makes them either more or less advantaged in educational terms. What is necessary for educational success according to Bourdieu, is a set of cultured behaviour. Cultural capital is the common sense, "innate" knowledge of how to do things "right." It is especially characterized by participation to culture, like reading literature, visiting museums, classical concerts and the theatre. The children of middle- and upper-class families have this behaviour; their working class peers do not. Bourdieu's argument says that schools are not socially neutral institutions but reflect the experiences of the "dominant class." Working class children consequently are less advantaged: they do not possess the expected experiences.

Parents from ethnic minorities often have a low educational and occupational level. So, children from ethnic minorities may be considered less advantaged. Indeed, some researchers have found that the low socio-economic status is the main reason for the less successful educational career of students from ethnic minorities (for example Van 't Hof & Dronkers, 1993; Kao & Tienda, 1995). However, other researchers question whether differences in socio-economic status are sufficient to explain the differences in academic achievement. Rumberger & Larson (1998) for example, studied the differences in educational achievement among a cohort of Mexican American language-minority students in the United States and concluded that sociocultural factors are important as well. In a study about changes

in achievement differences between "blacks" and "whites" Hedges and Nowell (1999) also conclude that the differences are not primarily explained by social class and that other factors, like discrimination play a role. On the other hand, Valenzuela & Dornbusch (1994) who studied a cultural factor, namely familism, concluded that the level of education of parents is important. They studied 2666 Anglo and 492 Mexican origin students and found that familism helps grades, but only if parents attained a high level of education. This seems to provide the parents with information about the educational system with which they can help their children.

When the socio-economic status of ethnic minorities is considered more precise, it appears that the socio-economic status of working class Dutch background parents and ethnic minority parents is not comparable: On average the educational level of ethnic minority parents is much lower. However, a low education might have a different meaning for ethnic minorities than for Dutch background people. Education can have a different meaning in different cultures and as a consequence a low education might represent a low socio-economic position for Dutch background people more than it does for, for example people of Turkish background. A certain amount of hidden talent among ethnic minority parents should be considered: For these parents, a good ability to achieve academically might not be expressed in a high education (Veenman, 1993). It has also been found that ethnic minority parents, more than Dutch background parents, want their children to attain a high level of education. For example, in the Netherlands, Ledoux et al. (1992) found that all Surinam, Turkish, Moroccan and Southern Europese background parents of the pupils in their investigation wanted and expected their children to obtain a high level of education. The reason the parents frequently come up with is that they want their children to do better than they have done in education and that they want their children to have opportunities they never had (Pels, 1991; Hermans, 1995; Ledoux, 1996). This is probably the result of their motivations for migrating: To "climb" socially. Ethnic minority parents do not have a lot of knowledge about the Dutch educational system (yet). Dutch working class parents might have better insights in the possibilities and consequently, might be more pessimistic/realistic. So, next to socio-economic status, the cultural capital of parents should be studied. It reflects the support the parents offer their children regarding their academic career more, than socio-economic status alone.

In the present study the extent to what the cultural capital of parents is related to their childrens' educational success will be studied. Next to cultural capital and socio-economic status, the ability to achieve academically might explain why some students have attained a higher level of education than others. For example, a possible outcome could be that only very capable ethnic minority students manage to attain a high level of education. Different mechanisms may play a role in different cultures/ethnic groups: Factors that play a role in the success of ethnic minority students do not have to be the same for Dutch background students. Differences between groups in these processes have not been studied very often. In the present study the school career of Dutch background students and ethnic minorities will be studied and compared.

Research questions

- What is the influence of cultural capital, socio-economic status and the ability to achieve academically on the school career of ethnic minority and Dutch background students in secondary school?
- What are the differences concerning these variables between the ethnic minority and native Dutch students?

Method

In this section we will discuss the data that have been used and the assessed variables. Finally we will present the mean scores on these variables for both the ethnic minority and Dutch background students.

The cohort

We needed *longitudinal* data about a longer period of the academic career of a sufficient number of ethnic minority students and Dutch background students. We have used existing data which were gathered for the purpose of evaluating a policy of the Dutch government directed towards favouring pupils with parents of a lower socio-economic status (Sühre et al., 1996). The data, from a cohort known as 1988-8, contains information on 5322 children about their school career in both primary and secondary school; intelligence; age; gender; socio-economic status, "cultural capital" and country of origin. The children were tested in the eighth grade (1988) of primary school (arithmetic and language) and the data also includes information about the first six years of secondary school. 75.5 percent (3953) of the students in the file are of Dutch background and 24.5 percent (1282) are ethnic minorities[2]. Most ethnic minorities in the file are either from a Surinamese, Turkish or Moroccan background. In table 1 the academic career of the different groups of students is presented. In the file on the cohort 1988-8 a distinction has been made between students with parents with a low socio-economic status and students with parents with a higher socio-economic status. In table 1 the academic career of Moroccan, Turkish, Surinam and Dutch students with a low socio-economic status and Dutch students without a low socio-economic position is presented.[3] In the table the educational levels in secondary school are expressed in scores on the educational ladder (Bosker & Van der Velden, 1989). Below the scores on the educational ladder and the corresponding school types (see figure 1) in the first year of secondary school are reported. In figure 1 combinations of school types (for example vbo/mavo) have been mentioned, because in the first year of secondary school and sometimes in the second year as well, students of different levels attend the same class. At the end of this period the students choose which school type they will attend in the next year. When a student moves from, for example, the fourth to the fifth year of secondary education within the same school type, the score on the educational ladder increases by one. In contrast, a student who repeats a class, receives the same score as the previous year. In this study the data on the sixth year of secondary school have not been used, because we did not have enough data to compute the scores on the educational ladder for this year.

ivbo/vbo	Vbo	vbo/mavo	mavo vbo/mavo/havo	mavo/havo	havo mavo/havo/vwo	havo/vwo	vwo
2,5	3	3,5	4	4,5	5	5,5	6

Abbreviations

havo: Higher general secondary education
hbo: Higher professional education
mavo: Lower general secondary education
mbo: Intermediate vocational education
vbo: Lower vocational education
vwo: Pre-university education

Source: De Wit e a. (1996).

[2] Of 89 students (1.6%) the data on the country of origin is missing. Because of oversampling, a much higher number of ethnic minorities are in the dataset than in the population.

[3] No distinction between a low and higher socio-economic status regarding the Turkish, Moroccan and Surinam background students has been made, because almost all have parents with a low socio-economic status.

Table 1 The school careers of Moroccan, Turkish, Surinam and Dutch students.

	Morocco	Turkey	Surinam	Dutch with a low socio-economic status	Dutch with a higher socio-economic status
primary school:					
language (max. = 67)	46.01	45.98	49.92	53.31	56.50
arithmetic (max. = 40)	20.91	21.69	21.48	25.24	28.36
advice for the first year of secondary school	3.60	3.52	3.74	3.82	4.49
secondary school:					
year 1	3.80	3.82	4.05	3.99	4.66
year 2	4.51	4.53	4.75	4.80	5.58
year 3	5.39	5.45	5.50	5.69	6.50
year 4	6.31	6.27	6.33	6.52	7.30
year 5	6.42	6.62	6.77	7.05	7.93
difference year 1 - year 5	2.62	2.80	2.72	3.06	3.27
N	*308*	*290*	*235*	*2247*	*1794*

The variables

In the present study the socio-economic status of parents has been assessed by the educational level of the father and the mother and by the occupational level of the father. The data were gathered in the last year of primary school (group 8). The occupational level of the mother was not taken into account, because a large number of mothers do not have a paid job. The educational level of the parents was scored on a seven-point scale, ranging from primary school to university. The occupational level was measured on a seven-point scale as well, ranging from 'unskilled labour' to 'higher employees'. The socio-economic status was calculated by the mean score on the three variables.

The cultural capital of parents has been assessed by their 'participation to culture', reading, and interest in their children's academic career. The data on cultural capital were gathered when the pupils were in the eighth year of primary school. 'Participation to culture' was measured by asking both the father and the mother how often they visit museums, classical concerts and the theatre. The parents were asked to score their answers on a four-point scale: 1 'never'; 2 'once or twice a year'; 3 '3-6 times a year'; 4 'more often'. The reliability of the scale consisting of six items is .87. The score on the scale was calculated by the mean score on the six items.

Both parents were asked how many books are present in their home, and how often they read and buy books. The questions were answered on a four-point scale. Crohnbach's alpha of the scale consisting of five items is .80. The score on the scale was calculated by the mean score on the five items.

The interest of parents in the school career of their children was measured by asking the parents about positive communication with the child about school. It was measured by six items: Both parents were asked whether they talk about school and academic achievement with their child and whether they compliment their child on their school record. The parents were asked to answer the questions on a four-point scale. Crohnbach's alpha is .81. The score on the scale was calculated by the mean score on the six items.

The ability to achieve academically, was assessed by scores on arithmetic and language and verbal and nonverbal intelligence in the last year of primary school.

Scores on arithmetic were measured by asking the pupils 40 questions which had to be answered by choosing the correct answer from three or four alternatives. The test consists of five subtests which assess mental arithmetic; whole numbers; fractions; percentages, proportions and measurements; time and money. The score on arithmetic was calculated by adding the number of correct answers (maximum 40).

Scores on language were assessed by asking the pupils 67 questions. The test consists of three subtests. In the first subtest the pupils have to judge whether a word has been formed correctly. In the second subtest the pupils have to indicate whether a sentence is grammatically correct and in the third subtest they have to assess whether a word or sentence is placed in the right context. The score on language was calculated by adding the number of correct answers (maximum 67).
Verbal intelligence was measured by two subtests: categories and analogies. The subtest categories consists of 15 questions. The pupils had to recognize the correspondence between three words and, on the basis of that, choose another word that belongs to the same category or type. The subtest analogies also consists of 15 questions. In every question the pupils are shown two pairs of words. Of the second pair a word is missing. The pupils have to fill in the missing word by choosing one from four alternatives. The word must be related to the other word in the pair, the same way as the first pair of words are related. The scores on the two subtests were added.
Nonverbal intelligence was assessed by two sub-tests as well: figures and exclusion. The subtest figures consists of 22 series of five abstract figures. The first figure is a geometric form, for example a square, from which a part has been omitted. One of the four other figures is the part that has been omitted and the question is to find this part. This requires an understanding of spatial matters. The subtest exclusion consists of 24 series of four abstract figures. Three figures belong together and the child has to choose the figure that does not belong to the other three. This subtest requires an understanding of spatial matters and the ability to reason. The scores on the two subtests were added.

In table 2 the mean scores and standard deviations of Dutch background and ethnic minority students are presented on socio-economic status; cultural capital; intelligence; language and arithmetic; the educational level in the first five years of secondary school; and gender. As in the analyses the different ethnic groups have not been analyzed separately, data on the school careers will be presented again.

Table 2 Mean scores and standard deviations of Dutch background and ethnic minority students on socio-economic status, cultural capital, the ability of the students to achieve academically, and the educational level in the first five years of secondary school

	Dutch background students			Ethnic minority students		
	Mean	Std.	n	Mean	Std.	n
SES	3.19	1.42	3154	2.17	1.39	715
Books	2.34	.67	2735	2.08	.73	551
Cultural participation	1.62	.96	2726	1.40	.61	541
Positive communication	3.67	.41	2734	3.48	.64	538
Verbal IQ	22.30	6.36	3896	17.88	7.26	1268
Nonverbal IQ	32.61	5.99	3896	31.03	6.22	1268
Language	54.73	6.61	3892	48.52	8.08	1263
Arithmetic	26.62	6.96	3881	22.45	7.48	1249
Advice for the first year of secondary school	4.12	.97	3814	3.74	.90	1239
Year 1	4.25	1.03	3880	3.99	1.00	1241
Year 2	5.11	1.12	3317	4.77	1.09	940
Year 3	5.96	1.20	3317	5.58	1.21	914
Year 4	6.81	1.23	3534	6.44	1.23	1019
Year 5	7.56	1.28	3014	7.22	1.22	778
difference between year 1 and year 5	3.31			3.23		

As expected, the ethnic minority students have lower scores on all variables than the Dutch background students: overall, the students achieve less well in primary school, attend lower educational levels in secondary school, have parents with a lower socio-economic status and less cultural capital. The mean intelligence scores show that the differences are much larger for language than for spatial matters and reasoning.

Results

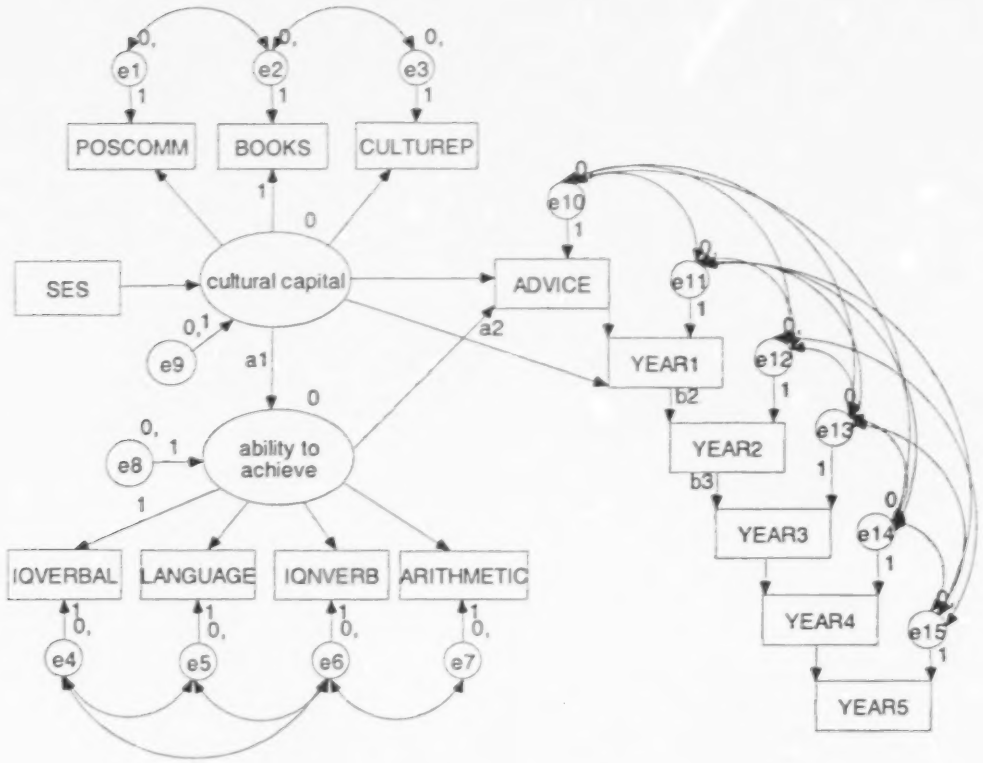
The influences on the school career of Dutch background students and students from ethnic minorities have been analyzed using Amos 4.0 (Arbuckle & Wothke, 1999). Structural equation modeling allows a complete and simultaneous test of all relationships between the variables. One simultaneous analysis of the Dutch background students and the ethnic minority students has been performed. So, the parameters about both groups were estimated at once. This method has two advantages over doing separate analyses for the Dutch background and ethnic minority groups. First, it provides a test for the significance of any differences found between Dutch background and ethnic minority students. Second, if it can be concluded that there is no difference between the groups, or if the group differences concern only a few model parameters, multi-group analysis provides more efficient parameter estimates than either of the two single-group models.

As can be seen in table 2, for some variables a lot of data is missing, especially for the ethnic minority students. The variables measuring cultural capital and socio-economic status have the most missings. A missing value analysis showed that the missings differ from the non-missings in academic achievement and intelligence in primary school and the educational level in secondary school: The scores for the missings are lower. To a large extent this is explained by the fact that far more data on the ethnic minority students are missing. Data on the academic achievement in primary school, intelligence, advice for secondary school and the academic level in the first year of secondary school are almost complete. In Amos, missing values can be Missing At Random (MAR). It means that missingness and data values are statistically unrelated, conditional on a set of predictor or stratifying variables X. One way to establish MAR processes is to include completely observed variables X that are highly predictive of incomplete data Y. Arbuckle & Wothke (1999) suggest that initial (complete) measurement(s) in longitudinal designs can sometimes serve as a good choice of X. Listwise deletion for example, require that the missingness is Missing Completely At Random, which is much more difficult to establish than MAR. In the presence of missing data Amos computes full information maximum likelihood (FIML) estimates. Amos does not impute data. When missingness conveys probabilistic information about the values that would have been observed, beyond all the information already given in the observed data, FIML estimates will tend to be less biased than the other methods (Little and Rubin, 1989).

As the data from the cohort 1988-8 contains information on quite a lot of students, we have split the file at random, in two parts with equal numbers of students. This way the estimated model can be tested for the second half of the data as well. A good fit of the model for this second half of the data is evidence for the reliability of the estimated model. First, a model structure has been specified for both the Dutch background and ethnic minority students with no restriction that the parameters must have the same values in the two groups. So, the regression weights, covariance paths, and variance were all allowed to be different for the ethnic minority and Dutch background students. Second, regression weights have been restricted across both groups. The regression weights were only restricted when this did not lead to a significant change in the fit of the model. In figure 2 the model that has been estimated is presented. Two different measures of fit will be presented: chi-square and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) (Browne & Cudeck, 1993). According to Browne & Cudeck a value of the RMSEA of about .05 or less indicates a close fit of the model in relation to the degrees of freedom. Chi-square for the model is 138 (df 114, p = .066) and the RMSEA .009. In table 3 the regression weights are displayed for both the Dutch background and ethnic minority students. The regression weights that have been restricted across groups are in bold. For both the ethnic minority and Dutch background students the standardized estimate of year 1 to year 2 is above 1. This is an error of estimation in AMOS;

there are no negative variances. The covariances between the error terms are presented in the appendix. Finally the model has been tested for the second half of the data: Chi-square = 148 (df 114 p = .017) and the RMSEA .011. Considering that with quite large samples Chi-square will show significant differences even when differences are very small, and that the RMSEA is near zero, it can be concluded that the model also fits the second half of the data well: it seems that the model is reliable.

Figure 2 Path Diagram for the influence of cultural capital, socio-economic status, and the ability to achieve academically on the different moments in the school career of ethnic minority and native Dutch students



culturep = participation to culture of parents: visiting museums, classical concerts and the theatre (assessed in group 8 of primary school)
poscomm = positive communication of the parents with the child regarding school (assessed in group 8 of primary school)
books = how often the parents read and presence of books (measured in group 8 of primary school)
ses = socio-economic status
iqverbal = verbal intelligence in group 8 of primary school
iqnonverb = nonverbal intelligence in group 8 of primary school
language = language scores in group 8 of primary school
arithmetic = scores on arithmetic in group 8 of primary school
advice = level of school the students are adviced to attend in the first year of secondary school
year 1 – year 5 = educational level in the first to sixth year of secondary school
ability to achieve = ability to achieve academically
a1, a2, b1 and b2 are regression weights that have been restricted across groups

Table 3 Regression Weights, standard errors and standardized estimates for Dutch background and ethnic minority students

Regression Weights			Dutch background students Estimate	S.E.	stand. estimate	Ethnic minority students Estimate	S.E.	stand. estimate
BOOKS	◗	cultural capital	1.000		0.538	1.000		0.707
CULTUREP	◗	cultural capital	0.863***	0.064	0.434	0.564***	0.072	0.528
POSCOMM	◗	cultural capital	0.191***	0.037	0.162	0.447***	0.081	0.377
IQVERBAL	◗	ability to achieve	1.000		0.542	1.000		0.633
LANGUAGE	◗	ability to achieve	1.283***	0.059	0.691	1.189***	0.078	0.676
IQNVERB	◗	ability to achieve	0.764***	0.044	0.466	0.601***	0.062	0.469
ARITHMETIC	◗	ability to achieve	1.507***	0.070	0.770	1.435***	0.090	0.880
cultural capital	◗	SES	0.214***	0.011	0.831	0.284***	0.023	0.796
ability to achieve	◗	**cultural capital (a1)**	**4.057*** **	**0.347**	**0.413**	**4.057*** **	**0.347**	**0.452**
ADVICE	◗	cultural capital	0.486***	0.070	0.182	0.254**	0.093	0.143
ADVICE	◗	ability to achieve	0.200***	0.010	0.735	0.137***	0.011	0.695
YEAR1	◗	**cultural capital (a2)**	**0.139*** **	**0.038**	**0.046**	**0.139*** **	**0.038**	**0.072**
YEAR1	◗	ADVICE	0.951***	0.019	0.897	0.858***	0.034	0.789
YEAR2	◗	**YEAR1 (b2)**	**1.137*** **	**0.019**	**1.046**	**1.137*** **	**0.019**	**1.077**
YEAR3	◗	**YEAR2 (b3)**	**1.027*** **	**0.015**	**0.965**	**1.027*** **	**0.015**	**0.867**
YEAR4	◗	YEAR3	1.027***	0.015	0.969	1.015***	0.045	0.998
YEAR5	◗	YEAR4	0.981***	0.013	0.953	0.949***	0.029	0.973

** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

The model describes that the socio-economic background of parents is of strong influence on the cultural capital of the parents: the degree to which they visit museums, classical concerts and the theatre; how often they read; and to what extent they are interested in the school career of their child(ren). In other words, the socio-economic status of the parents is, to a large extent, reflected in the cultural capital of the parents. Subsequently the cultural capital influences the students' ability to achieve academically, which influences the advice they receive for the first year of secondary school. The school advice is also determined by the ability of the students to achieve academically. In the first year of secondary school an additional effect is present from cultural capital. This means that the effect of cultural capital is enlarged in the first year. This effect is the same for both ethnic minority and Dutch background students. The positions in secondary school in later years are best explained by the position in the year before; there are no additional effects of cultural capital, socio-economic status and ability. Next to the effect of cultural capital on year 1, both groups do not differ in the effect of cultural capital on the ability to achieve academically and the effects of year 1 on year 2 and year 2 on year 3. For the difference between the two groups regarding the effect of socio-economic status on cultural capital $p < .01$, for the effect of cultural capital on advice $p < .05$ and for the effect of the ability to achieve on advice $p < .001$. We will discuss the differences and similarities between both groups in greater depth in the next paragraph.

Conclusions and Discussion

Compared to the ethnic minority students the students of Dutch background clearly attain higher levels of academic achievement. Their parents also have a higher socio-economic status and more cultural capital. The Dutch background students have a higher academic achievement in primary school as well, especially for language. In secondary school the

ethnic minority students start at a lower level than Dutch background students and their increase in educational level from the first to the fifth year of secondary school is less high.[4]

As we have already mentioned, the cultural capital of the parents is, to a large extent, determined by their socio-economic status. This is more the case for Dutch background than for ethnic minority students ($p < .01$): for migrants the cultural capital is more influenced by matters outside work and education. In the literature it was already mentioned that for ethnic minority parents a good ability to achieve academically might not fully be expressed in a high education: a certain amount of hidden talent among ethnic minority parents should be considered. The difference between both groups in the distribution of the scores on socio-economic status may also play a role: a much larger part of the ethnic minority parents have the lowest score on this variable compared with the Dutch background parents. The influence of cultural capital on the ability of the students to achieve academically, is the same for both migrant and Dutch background students. So, although the cultural capital is not influenced by the socio-economic status to the same extent, the influence of cultural capital on the ability of the students is the same. It should be noted that in the model cultural capital is, concerning content, somewhat different for ethnic minority and Dutch background students. Looking at the unstandardized estimates, for ethnic minority students cultural capital consists less of culture participation and more of positive communication. Regarding the latent variable 'ability to achieve academically', the differences between both groups seem to be smaller.

The influence of the ability of the students to achieve academically on the school type they are advised to go, is higher for Dutch background than for ethnic minority students ($p < .001$). This is in line with the finding in the Netherlands, that migrants with an equally high academic achievement, receive advices for school types of a higher level in the last year of primary school than Dutch background students with the same socio-economic background (for example Koeslag & Dronkers, 1994; Mulder & Suhre, 1995). Possibly, in their school advice the teachers adjust for the lower language scores of students from ethnic minorities.

Less than for Dutch background students, the school advice of students from ethnic minorities is influenced by cultural capital ($p < .05$). As mentioned above, minority ethnic groups on average have a considerably lower socio-economic status than people of Dutch background. Because of this, teachers might take the cultural capital less into account when forming the advice for secondary school for migrant than for Dutch background students. Teachers often have less contact with migrant parents than with Dutch background parents, for which language problems are an important reason.

More often than the Dutch background students, the migrant students chose to attend a higher level of secondary school than what they were advised ($p < .01$). This is probably inherent in migration, because for migrants, the reason for migrating is usually improving one's social status. Because most of the parents were not able to fulfil that wish themselves, it is likely that they have placed their hope in their children and encourage them to attend a higher school type. Moreover, the choice for a higher school type than advised, seems to be effective, because on average the difference between the chosen and advised school type (although smaller) still exists after five years.

It can be concluded that it is better to study cultural capital than socio-economic status alone. Although it may be said that socio-economic status works through cultural capital, this is more the case for Dutch background than for ethnic minority students. Cultural capital does however have the same influence on the ability to achieve academically for both migrant and Dutch background students. Nevertheless, during the school career also other factors seem to play a role for migrants than for students of Dutch background. The less favourable

[4] As can be seen in table 1, the different ethnic minority groups have different scores. The different groups have not been analyzed separately, because the largest differences in achievement are between the Dutch background and ethnic minority students.

development of the school career of migrant students is somewhat compensated by the higher advices for secondary school they receive considering their academic achievement in primary school, and by the fact that they more often choose to attend a higher school level than they are advised to attend. As has been mentioned above, the latter might be inherent in migration.

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Appendix

Table 4 Covariances and standard errors

	Dutch background students		Ethnic minority students	
Covariances:	Estimate	S.E.	Estimate	S.E.
e11 ⟷ e10	-0.048***	0.011	0.002 ns	0.022
e12 ⟷ e11	-0.163***	0.009	-0.223***	0.020
e12 ⟷ e10	-0.046***	0.012	-0.046*	0.020
e13 ⟷ e12	0.003 ns	0.008	0.040*	0.020
e13 ⟷ e10	-0.035***	0.010	-0.025 ns	0.023
e13 ⟷ e11	-0.040***	0.006	-0.063**	0.019
e14 ⟷ e13	-0.053***	0.007	-0.251***	0.036
e14 ⟷ e10	-0.021*	0.010	-0.022 ns	0.029
e14 ⟷ e11	-0.009 ns	0.006	-0.016 ns	0.019
e15 ⟷ e14	-0.055***	0.007	-0.107***	0.023
e15 ⟷ e12	0.029***	0.008	0.053**	0.018
e15 ⟷ e13	-0.008 ns	0.007	0.003 ns	0.021
e15 ⟷ e11	-0.013*	0.006	-0.035*	0.015
e2 ⟷ e1	0.028***	0.007	0.050*	0.023
e2 ⟷ e3	.083***	0.013	0.046*	0.023
e6 ⟷ e7	3.175***	0.667	4.048**	1.428
e6 ⟷ e5	1.876**	0.665	2.818 ns	1.554
e6 ⟷ e4	6.700***	0.721	5.513***	1.424
e5 ⟷ e4	2.011**	0.722	4.623**	1.712

ns not significant, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

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